

Amendments to the Claims

The following listing of claims will replace all prior listings, and versions, of the claims in this application.

Listing of Claims

1-2. (Canceled)

3. (Currently amended) The absorbent article as set forth in claim ~~31~~ 39, wherein a ratio of the second spacing frequency of CD strands to the first spacing frequency of MD strands is about 0.9 (CD) to 1.0 (MD).

4. (Original) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 3 wherein the ratio is about 0.75 (CD) to 1.0 (MD).

5. (Original) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 3, wherein the ratio is about 0.5 (CD) to 1.0 (MD).

6. (Original) The absorbent article according to claim 3, wherein the reduced frequency range of CD strands is about 0.9 to 0.5 relative to the frequency of MD strands at 1.0.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Currently amended) The absorbent article as set forth in claim ~~31~~ 39, wherein the machine direction of the scrim member has end zones and a central zone, and said second spacing frequency of CD strands being provided in said central zone.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently amended) The absorbent article as set forth in claim ~~32~~ 40, wherein a strand diameter ratio of the CD strand diameter to the MD strand diameter is less than about 0.95.

11. (Original) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 10, wherein the strand diameter ratio is less than about 0.9.

12. (Original) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 11, wherein the strand diameter ratio is less than about 0.75.

13. (Original) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 12, wherein the strand diameter ratio is less than about 0.5.

14. (Canceled)

15. (Currently amended) The absorbent article as set forth in claim ~~34~~ 35, wherein at least some of said CD strands are generally elliptical in cross-section and have major and minor axes, the minor axis being arranged substantially normal to a plane of the MD strands.

16. (Previously presented) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 15 wherein the MD strands are generally elliptical in cross-section, having major and minor axes, the minor axes of the CD strands being on average of a lesser dimension than the minor axes of the MD strands.

17. (Canceled)

18. (Currently amended) ~~The~~ An absorbent article ~~as set forth in claim 34~~

for absorbing body fluids comprising an absorbent core being at least partially made of fibers and constructed and arranged for receiving and holding such fluids and including a reinforcing scrim member intimately associated with the absorbent core to maintain its structural integrity in use, the absorbent core having an upper region and a lower region, the scrim member being located intermediate the upper and lower regions, said scrim member comprising a network of machine direction (MD) strands extending in a machine direction, and cross direction (CD) strands extending in a cross direction, at least some of said MD strands and CD strands crossing over each other and being interconnected, the MD strands and the CD strands cooperatively defining a plurality of openings in the scrim member, said MD strands being selected and formed to provide a predetermined stiffness and strength in supporting said absorbent core in the machine direction, and said CD strands being selected and formed with at least one characteristic difference from said MD strands to provide a stiffness of the absorbent core in the cross direction that is less than said stiffness of the absorbent core in the machine direction, wherein the network of MD strands and CD strands is formed with at least some of the CD strands being continuous and having weakened points along their lengths to enhance buckling, the scrim member being attached to the absorbent core through at least one of fibers from the upper region of the absorbent core passing through openings in the scrim member and entangling with fibers from the lower region; fibers from the lower region of the absorbent core passing through the openings in the scrim member and entangling with fibers in the upper region; fibers from the upper region of the absorbent core passing through openings in the scrim member and entangling with other fibers in the upper region so that the entangled fibers encircle and

thereby capture at least one strand of the scrim member; and fibers from the lower region of the absorbent core passing through openings in the scrim member and entangling with other fibers in the lower region so that the entangled fibers encircle and thereby capture at least one strand of the scrim member, wherein the CD strands are at least one of notched, abraded and compressed at predetermined places between preselected MD strands to provide the weakened points.

19. (Original) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 18, wherein the weakened points on one of the CD strands are offset in the cross direction from the weakened points on an adjacent CD strand.

20. (Original) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 18, wherein the weakened points are reduced in at least one transverse dimension of the CD strands as compared to other parts of the CD strands.

21-26. (Canceled)

27. (Currently amended) The absorbent article as set forth in claim ~~31~~ 18 wherein the absorbent article is a disposable garment.

28. (Original) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 27 wherein the absorbent article is a diaper.

29. (Original) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 27 wherein the absorbent article is a child's training pants.

30. (Original) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 27 wherein the absorbent article is one of an adult incontinence diaper, adult incontinence pad, adult incontinence pant and adult incontinence undergarment.

31-34. (Cancelled)

35. (Previously presented) An absorbent article for absorbing body fluids comprising an absorbent core constructed and arranged for receiving and holding such fluids and including a reinforcing scrim member intimately associated with the absorbent core to maintain its structural integrity in use, said scrim member comprising a network of machine direction (MD) strands extending in a machine direction, and cross direction (CD) strands extending in a cross direction, at least some of said MD strands and CD strands crossing over each other and being interconnected, said MD strands being selected and formed to provide a predetermined stiffness and strength in supporting said absorbent core in the machine direction, and said CD strands being selected and formed with at least one characteristic difference from said MD strands to provide a stiffness of the absorbent core in the cross direction that is less than said stiffness of the absorbent core in the machine direction, wherein the network of MD strands and CD strands is formed with at least some of the CD strands having weakened points along their lengths to enhance buckling, the CD strands being at least one of notched, abraded and compressed at predetermined places between preselected ones of the MD strands to provide the weakened points, and wherein the weakened points on the CD strands are cut through, and such weakened points on one CD strand are offset from the weakened points on an adjacent CD strand.

36-37. (Canceled)

38. (Currently amended) The absorbent article as set forth in claim ~~34~~ 35, wherein the scrim member is attached to the absorbent core through entanglement of at least some fibers of the absorbent core with the CD strands of the scrim member and at least some other fibers of the absorbent core with the MD strands of the scrim member.

39. (New) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 35 wherein the MD strands are spaced according to a first spacing frequency, and at least some of said CD strands have a second spacing frequency different from the first spacing frequency of the MD strands.

40. (New) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 35 wherein said MD strands each have a strand diameter, and wherein said CD strands each have a strand diameter less than said MD strand diameter.

41. (New) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 40 wherein both of said MD strands and said CD strands are round in cross-section.

42. (New) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 35 wherein the CD strand is corrugated and forms peaks and valleys along the cross direction thereof, said MD strands being arranged to engage the CD strands across the peaks and valleys thereof.

43. (New) The absorbent article as set forth in claim 35 wherein the CD strands are woven under and over the MD strands.